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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNSC](#) [KUNR](#) [GM](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: UN/GERMANY: STATE SECRETARY PFLUGER ON IRAN, LATIN  
AMERICA AND UN REFORM

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative,  
for reasons 1.4 b,d.

¶1. (C) Summary. Ambassador Bolton discussed Iran, Latin America and UN reform initiatives, including the recently formed Human Rights Council, with German State Secretary Freidbert Pfluger on March 20. Pfluger reiterated Germany's steadfast support for efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, but expressed concern that the Council would be unable to maintain consensus at later stages, particularly if military action were required to enforce Iranian compliance. Ambassador Bolton noted that the future course of events would be determined by whether Iran makes the strategic decision to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons.  
End Summary.

¶2. (C) Ambassador Bolton met with German Member of Parliament and State Secretary Freidbert Pfluger on March 20, during Dr. Pfluger's two-day visit to New York. Pfluger asked for an update on the Iran discussions within the Security Council, noting that the German Government has been clear that Iran cannot be allowed to have nuclear weapons. He noted recent comments by the Iranian President calling for the destruction of Israel and Iran's "support for terror all over." Pfluger expressed appreciation for President Bush's decision to support the EU3 negotiation process, but expressed concern about what steps would follow a Security Council statement. "Do we have the will or the means?" he asked, to stop Iran's march towards nuclear weapons capability.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Bolton responded the U.S. had been clear, at the highest levels, that Iran must not be allowed to possess nuclear weapons. The Security Council now needs to send a strong, unified message to Iran. The next steps would be determined by Iran's response to the Council's action. If Iran made the strategic decision to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons, then we would expect a quick return to negotiations. However, absent such a strategic decision, the Council would have to consider further measures to increase the pressure on Tehran, including sanctions targeted at the regime leaders and their strategic weapons programs. Referring to press reporting on former Iranian negotiator Hassan Rowhani's statements, Ambassador Bolton noted that the Iranians had admitted taking advantage of the negotiation process to date to advance their nuclear weapons program. The United States has sought to move the discussion to the Security Council for years, as the Council has the ability to increase the political pressure on Iran. But the Council needs to act quickly, as Iran is using the current delay to "draw in" developing countries with oil and gas deals and the deliberate mischaracterization of the dispute as an attempt to deny Iran "its right" to peaceful nuclear energy.

¶4. (C) Pfluger asked if the recently announced U.S.-India civilian nuclear energy deal would have an impact on our collective ability to deal with the Iranian threat.

Ambassador Bolton said that there would not be any "real world spillover." The two governments bore no comparison to one another -- India was seeking to move towards the IAEA, while Iran is making a deliberate, strategic choice to move away from the non-proliferation regime, having signed and then broken its NPT commitments. Iran's actions posed a real threat of proliferation, in the region and beyond.

15. (C) Pfluger noted that he had been in Washington with Chancellor Merkel and that the Chancellor had sought to "restore the balance" to the German-U.S. relationship. "No more axis with Russia and France," he said. He expressed concern, however, that support and sympathy for the U.S. continued to decrease among European publics, which he thought would undermine our shared objective in fighting Islamic terrorism. He also said that the U.S. and Europe needed to pay more attention to the current situation in Latin America, which he called "very scary." The combination of the aggressive policies of Venezuelan President Chavez ("a real big danger") and the fact that democracy is "not deeply rooted" risks a retreat from liberal values and institutions in Latin America.

16. (C) On the recent vote to establish a Human Rights Council (HRC) over U.S. objections, Pfluger noted that he thought the "absolute majority" requirement for membership would successfully keep the worst outlaws off the Council. In response to Pfluger's question on U.S. plans, Ambassador Bolton noted that the U.S. was still evaluating the situation, but noted that the new Council reduced the number of seats available to western nations by thirty percent. Pfluger asked about the prospects for a permanent German seat on the Security Council. Ambassador Bolton replied that Germany was in a difficult position, given that it was seeking a third permanent seat for Europe. In the typical UN way of doing business, a third EU seat would require the

"trade-off" of adding a number of permanent seats from other regions, leading to overly large enlargement proposals that put at risk the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. The U.S. continues to believe that there are other higher priorities for UN reform, including upcoming Secretariat and mandate reform efforts, and that - as a first rule - any effort to expand the Security Council must "do no harm."

BOLTON